Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat
Secrétariat du Conseil du Trésor du Canada
Canada

Summary of the evaluation of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Values and Ethics Program

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Summary of the evaluation of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's Values and Ethics Program

From Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat

The Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat's (TBS) Values and Ethics (V&E) Program was established in April 2008. The objectives of the V&E program are to:

- **promote** the application of and adherence to the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector
- **increase** the visibility of leaders in promoting, modelling, and highlighting values and ethics
- **communicate** V&E policies, expectations and guidance
- **increase** awareness of and confidence in workplace values and ethics processes and mechanisms

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Evaluation scope and methodology

The evaluation assessed relevance and performance and was calibrated to the materiality of the program. The rapid impact evaluation (RIE) method was used to gather subject matter expert and technical advisor assessments of the program's impact. Five lines of evidence were used (administrative data review, document review, key informant interviews (4), focus groups (2), and targeted literature review).

Evaluation limitation

There was 1 limitation; the RIE may not lend itself to clear reporting of program impact. This was mitigated by having the report peer-reviewed by an evaluator who was unfamiliar with the method and seeking comments from program administrators.

V&E Program outcomes

Immediate and intermediate outcomes of the program strive to support all employees and create a workplace in which public sector values guide decision-making and support a respectful work environment. The long-term outcome is a public service that is professional, non-partisan, highly ethical and maintains public trust.

Performance measures

- The % of TBS employees who know where to seek assistance if they face an ethical issue
- The % of TBS employees who feel they can bring an ethical issue to their manager
- Employee perceptions of ethical behaviour by leadership

Evaluation findings

Is there a need for the program? Yes.
The program activities and focus are aligned to support the priorities expressed by the deputy head and TBS's Every Day Commitment as well as ensure that employees understand their conditions of employment as per the Values and Ethics Code for the Public Sector.

Does the program align with Government of Canada priorities? Yes.
The V&E program is aligned with federal roles and responsibilities as well as all pertinent legislation and codes.

Does the program perform as expected? Yes, it largely does.

- Most employees know how to access advice and assistance on ethical issues.
- The single greatest influence on an organization's values-based decision-making and ethical culture is its leadership.
- The V&E program raises awareness of values and ethics at TBS and provides guidance so that employees can apply the public sector code and the Departmental Code of Conduct.
- V&E program advice mitigates ethical issues so that formal mechanisms for resolution are not needed.

Recommendations

1. The V&E program should:
    - define its outcomes (the development of a logic model is suggested for this exercise) and
    - revise the TBS Values and Ethics Plan 2016-19, as required.
2. To strengthen their leadership role, the V&E program should reinforce the practice of mandatory training for all executives.
3. Given that the Ombudsman role supports the program's outcomes and sets a positive tone within the organization, the V&E program should continue to strengthen the Ombudsman role.

Read the full Evaluation of the Treasury Board of Canada Secretariat Values and Ethics Program

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